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RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEWMFD/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEPADJ/CJTF HOA PRIORITY

RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 7952

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SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/FO, AF/RSA, AF/E, AND IO/UNP

NSC FOR MGAVIN

SECDEF FOR OSD/ISA AFRICAN AFFAIRS (VHUDDLESTON)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MASS](#) [SO](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: USAU: AFRICAN UNION UNDETERRED BY ATTACK ON AMISOM
TROOPS IN MOGADISHU

¶1. (U) The African Union Commission's Acting Head of the Peace and Security Department, El-Ghassim Wane, told international partners on September 25 that the African Union is keen to get the remaining three AMISOM battalions into Somalia by the end of the year, although he acknowledged that could be a tall order. Other African states must "shoulder the burden." Wane told ambassadors and other diplomats from donor countries that the troops need both lethal and non-lethal equipment to help them carry out their mission. "If you don't have sufficient lethal weapons, there isn't much you can do," Wane conceded, referring to those armed groups fighting the Somali Transitional Federal government.

¶2. (SBU) Wane noted that the AU Commission continues to adapt AMISOM's mandate to the changing conditions in Mogadishu, but that any strengthening of the mandate would need to be accompanied by an upgrade in equipment used by the troops. (Comment: While the AU has not yet changed AMISOM's mandate, the AMISOM Force Commander and AU Commission leadership have periodically focused on different components and adjusted their interpretation of the existing mandate to adapt to changing battlefield conditions. End Comment.) Wane said he expects that in the next two weeks, the AU Commission will take a decision on whether to strengthen AMISOM's mandate. He said there would be risks associated with doing so. The AU also continues to advocate strengthening of the political process, imposing sanctions on "spoilers," and establishing a naval blockade and other measures to stem the flow of arms and other support to Al-Shabaab.

¶3. (U) With respect to the September 17 attack on AMISOM forces in Mogadishu, Wane gave a tally of the dead and injured, and stated that it was clear to the AU that foreign fighters were involved in the operation. These foreign fighters see Somalia as "the battleground to carry out jihad." In response to a question by USAU Ambassador Battle about the impact the attack had on Burundi's commitment to AMISOM, Wane replied that reports of calls for withdrawal of the Burundian contingent were linked to Burundi's forthcoming election. The Burundian government remains very committed to the mission, Wane asserted. AMISOM troop contributing countries and the AU agree that they need to make sure such attacks do not occur again, he said.

¶4. (SBU) In response to a question about whether the AU agreed that Somalia was becoming another Afghanistan (in reference to a recent statement by EU Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid Karel de Gucht), Wane said

the statement was not reassuring and acknowledged that foreign fighters were coming to Somalia because it was a territory conducive to carrying out their activities. He called for more intelligence sharing, more troop contributing countries from African, and more partner financial, equipment, and training support. (Comment: The AU has requested U.S. logistical support for the fourth Burundian battalion that they have pledged in support of AMISOM, but this request remains unfulfilled. With AU Chairperson Jean Ping due to meet with A/S Johnnie Carson in the coming days, this is an opportunity for the USG to make clear our intent to train, equip, lift, and sustain these AMISOM troops. End Comment.)
MEECE